

## NEWS RELEASE

**INDIANA  
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT**



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Media Contact: Jeff Harris, 317/ 232-3396  
Diane Wieland 317/ 232-6699

Joseph E. Kernan, Governor  
Alan D. Degner, Commissioner

### **\* PUBLIC NOTICE \***

## ***Workers at Huntington's Vermont Castings Majestic Products Co. receive federal TAA certification***

Indianapolis, Ind. – The Indiana Department of Workforce Development announced today that the U.S. Department of Labor has ruled that employees of Huntington County's Vermont Castings Majestic Products Co. are eligible to receive federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

Located in Huntington, Vermont Castings Majestic Products Co. recently announced it would lay off 215 of its 500 workers as it ends production of fireplace inserts and stoves. Owned by Canadian-based CFM Specialty Home Products, its warehouse will remain open.

The TAA program, which is administered at the state level by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, is made available to workers who are displaced due to foreign imports or shifts in production out of the country.

In order for dislocated workers to be eligible for TAA benefits, a company executive, union representative or three former employees requesting these benefits must file a petition with U.S. Department of Labor and it must be approved before these benefits can be released. The investigation was initiated on March 3, 2004, in response to a petition filed by the company on behalf of its workers. The investigation revealed that the decline in employment at the facility was due to the shift in production of fireplaces to Canada and Mexico, and the workers were certified as TAA eligible on March 31, 2004.

Any employee, who has been or will be totally or partially separated from employment on or after March 2, 2003 through the two years from the date of certification, is eligible for adjustment assistance. The TAA program provides a variety of benefits and services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for a variety of re-employment services, job search and relocation allowances and training. In addition, weekly trade re-adjustment allowances may be payable to eligible workers following the exhaustion of unemployment insurance benefits.

Additionally, the Department of Labor issued a certification for alternative trade adjustment assistance (ATAA) for older workers. It was found that a significant number of workers at the company age 50 or over possess skills that are not easily transferable and that competitive conditions within the industry are adverse. Older workers may choose between regular TAA benefits or a wage subsidy of 50% of the difference between their new salary and old salary, up to \$10,000.

Information sessions for workers on how to apply for TAA and ATAA are currently being planned and will be announced at a later date. Eligible parties may also contact Joe Mercheck or Janice Silkworth in Fort Wayne's WorkOne office at 260/745-3555 ext. 361 or 362 or any WorkOne Center for more information.

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